

Marylanders Grow Oysters

Join the Team

- Application Form Attached -

Launched by Governor Martin O'Malley in September 2008, *Marylanders Grow Oysters* is a program designed to foster stewardship of the Chesapeake Bay and create living oyster reef populations in sanctuaries. Through the cooperative efforts of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and numerous partners, last fall 177 waterfront property owners began growing oysters in 854 oyster cages along the Tred Avon River in the first phase of the program. In 2009, the program will expand to other tributaries.

Through this fun, educational program, citizen volunteers tend to young oysters growing in wire mesh cages suspended from their piers for their first year of life. The oyster spat and cages are provided by DNR and other program partners at no charge to the volunteers. The oysters require minimal care – mostly rinsing the cages every two weeks. Citizen volunteers enjoy the personal rewards of stewardship while contributing to the enhancement of an oyster reef in their tributary. After about 12 months, the year-old oysters are collected and planted in a local oyster sanctuary, and a new group of young oysters are distributed to participating growers to start the process again.

Join the 2009 Expansion!

Marylanders Grow Oysters is expanding for 2009, and DNR is looking for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to join this effort. NGOs will act as the local project coordinator supported by DNR and other program partners – identifying waterfront property owners willing to become oyster growers and delivering oyster cages and oysters to growers in the tributary. The NGO could be a

community association, a non-profit organization, a RiverKeeper or similar group. Formal non-profit tax status is not required to be the local NGO.

The identifying features of the Marylanders Grow Oysters program are:

(1) Tributary Focus – growers are sought for a concentrated effort in a creek or river, (b) Ecological Purpose – oysters are grown to enhance the ecology of the sanctuary, they are not grown to be eaten, (c) Cages & Oysters – are provided at no cost to the grower, (d) Local Sponsor – the program needs your local commitment to implement the program in 2009.

Through your efforts and the effort of your growers, not only will more oysters be placed in the Chesapeake Bay but the rejuvenated oyster reef will become a natural underwater ecosystem for an abundance of aquatic life.

Following is additional information on how the program operates, its goals, and how you can be involved in 2009 and beyond.



Responsibilities 2009

DNR and its program partners will:

- provide and deliver the cages and oyster spat to a central location between June and August 2009 (date and location to be determined with the NGO)
- provide guidance and advice to assist the NGO with program implementation
- select the sanctuary for planting the oysters in 2010
- conduct the planting of the oysters in the sanctuary

NGO will:

- identify oyster growers and assemble an address list
- coordinate and implement the filling of the cages with spat and delivery of cages and spat to growers
- warehouse any extra cages containing spat at a pier location suitable for holding cages for a few months pending additional growers
- maintain monthly contact with the growers and weekly contact with DNR
- collect the oysters after one year at a central location and count oysters from select cages to assess growth and survival results
- restock the growers with spat

For data collection to track results, DNR will provide training and forms.

Application Process

An application form for Marylanders Grow Oysters is attached. DNR wants your application to be successful and will help in any way possible. We conducted this program in the Tred Avon and are pleased to help you consider all the logistics. Please contact us for any advice or help as you prepare this form. DNR will most likely follow-up with applicants before making a final decision.

Completed applications are due to DNR by

May 22, 2009. The application package must:

- address the responsibilities listed above and explain how the NGO will accomplish them
- provide documentation on the NGO's ability to implement the project in terms of staff, volunteers, logistics and any funding that is needed by the applicant (DNR is not able to provide funding for tasks to be completed by the NGO)
- include a map of the tributary and the geographic area to be covered by the NGO
- designate the number of piers within the project area, the number of potential growers, and the location of the in-water "warehouse" site (pier) for extra caged oysters if such a site is needed. (If all cages can be distributed in one day there is no need for an in-water "warehouse" site).

Please mail email, or FAX your application package by May 22, 2009 to:

Christopher Judy

Fisheries Service, B-2
580 Taylor Avenue
Annapolis MD 21401
Phone: 410-260-8259
FAX: 410-260-8279
email: cjudy@dnr.state.md.us

Tributary Selection

A tributary for Marylanders Grow Oysters must have salinities that support oyster survival and growth (see attached map showing the range of suitable environments), enough piers to support at least 500 cages with a target of 4 to 20 cages per pier, and a local organization able to implement the program tasks. Preference will be given to tributaries/groups that are able to identify substantial numbers of interested participants and use this project to further engage participants in other activities.

Timeline

MAY	DNR receives application forms
MAY	DNR selects the tribes/groups for 2009 Program
JUNE-JULY	NGO assembles growers
JULY/AUGUST	NGO distributes cages/oysters and warehouses extras until growers are found
SEPTEMBER	NGO wraps up project and delivers any extra cages to new-comers
2009-10	Citizens tend oysters
DECEMBER 2009	NGO submits 2009 progress report to DNR
SUMMER 2010	NGO submits final report to DNR

Tred Avon Partners

Maryland Department of Natural Resources – project oversight and coordination

Chesapeake Bay Foundation – advice and cage design

Oyster Recovery Partnership – cage distribution and spat creation

University of MD Center for Estuarine and Environmental Studies – spat creation

Maryland Department of Public Safety and

Correctional Services – cage construction

TA County Department of Public Works – local coordination and mailing list

Tributary Teams – local coordination

Chesapeake Bay Trust – cage material procurement

Growers – the Tred Avon waterfront property owners





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application form

Complete the application, attaching additional pages as needed.
Submit the application form no later than May 22, 2009 to:

Christopher Judy
Fisheries Service
580 Taylor Avenue B-2
Annapolis MD 21401
FAX: 410-260-8279
email: cjudy@dnr.state.md.us

1. Applicant Information

Date: _____

Name of Organization: _____

Mission of Organization: _____

Tax Status (i.e., 501c3, local government, public school, etc.) – if applicable:
It is not required that your group have any special tax status.

Executive Officer of Requesting Organization

Project Officer

Name: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Title: _____

Address: _____

Address: _____

County: _____

County: _____

Daytime Phone: _____

Daytime Phone: _____

Fax: _____

Fax: _____

Email Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Signature: _____

Signature: _____

Original Signature required

Original Signature required



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2. Project Location Information

In which river, stream, or local watershed(s) will the project be located? Please provide a map.

In which county or counties will the project be located?

3. Project Implementation Information - Respond to each question below, in less than 6 pages.

A) Project Abstract: In 2 or 3 sentences, provide a brief description of your Marylanders Grow Oysters project and the main methods of implementation. How will your project implement and support the goals for oyster growing and citizen involvement? What are the specific objectives of the project?

B) Project Description: Address these questions as they apply to your project:

- What are the steps that will be taken to complete the project (methodology)? Please respond to the specific NGO responsibilities listed on page 2 and the similar task list in the Overview Diagram on page 4. Your application will be evaluated largely on your response to this item.
- Is this project an extension of an on-going or recently completed project?
- If your organization is already growing oysters through another gardening or growing program, please provide a brief description of the project in your tributary (source of oysters, type of equipment used, number of growers in the program).
- If you are applying for a grant to another organization to assist you in implementing Marylanders Grow Oysters, which grant and how does your work with Marylanders Grow Oysters meet the goals and criteria of the grant program to which you are applying?

(Go to the Application Instructions of the grant program to which you are applying for description of goals and criteria.)

- Describe your organization's experience in completing similar oyster restoration and/or environmental Bay related projects.
- List your project partners and describe what specific roles each partner will play in completing the project.
- How many piers are in your project area?
- How many oyster cages do you anticipate distributing?
- How many members are in your community/volunteer group (NGO)?

C) Project Timeline: Outline the project schedule. Include the start date, end date, and major milestones.